

Amendments to the Claims:


This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

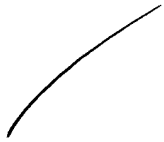
Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) An engineered spun yarn comprising ~~of~~ a series of spun fibers or filaments about three inches or less in length, including at least one of the following: natural fibers, synthetic fibers and a combination of natural and synthetic fibers, and the yarn further comprising at least one core fiber and wrapped with at least one sheath fiber, wherein the core and sheath fibers are engaged by needles arranged to penetrate substantially through a centerline of the yarn so as to penetrate and engage the core and sheath fibers and cause the core and sheath fibers to substantially intermix as the needles move therethrough to provide the fibers of the resultant spun yarn with enhanced resistance to unraveling, resistance to linting, an increase in bulk or desired aesthetic properties.
2. (currently amended) The yarn of claim 1 and wherein the engineered spun yarn comprises a ~~composite yarn including~~ a first yarn and further includes a second yarn each consisting essentially of natural fibers, synthetic fibers or a combination thereof, the first and second yarns positioned adjacent and parallel to each other such that the needles penetrate approximately through ~~the centerline~~ centerlines of both yarns so that the fibers of the

core and sheath of the first yarn ~~to provide the yarn~~ are intermixed with the fibers of the second yarn to weld the yarns together to form ~~the~~ a composite yarn.

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3. (original) The yarn of claim 2 and wherein the first and second yarns each have different material properties such that the composite yarn includes the different material properties of both yarns.
 4. (original) The yarn of claim 1 and wherein the core and sheath fibers each have different material properties to produce a composite yarn incorporating such different material properties.
 5. (canceled)
 6. (original) The yarn of claim 4 and wherein the fibers of the yarn include fibers having enhanced liquid absorption properties and fibers having enhanced abrasive properties.
 7. (original) The yarn of claim 1 and wherein the yarn comprises a Dref yarn.
 8. (original) The yarn of claim 1 and wherein the yarn comprises an open-end spun yarn.
 9. (original) The yarn of claim 1 and wherein the yarn comprises a ring spun yarn.

10. (original) The yarn of claim 1 and wherein the yarn comprises a vortex spun yarn.
11. (original) The yarn of claim 1 and wherein the yarn comprises a worsted spun yarn.
12. (original) The yarn of claim 1 and wherein the yarn comprises a worsted carded fibrous mass.
13. (currently amended) A core spun yarn having improved properties such as enhanced resistance to unraveling and linting, an increase in bulk or desired aesthetic features, the yarn comprising a core including fibers having desired material properties, and a sheath including fibers having additional desired material properties, the yarn being twisted and thereafter subjected to a needling process wherein the yarn is engaged by a series of needles that penetrate the fibers of the core and the sheath and to cause intermixing of the fibers of the core and with the fibers of the sheath as the needles pass therethrough and to lock in the twist of the yarn without heat setting to form the yarn with combined material properties of the core and sheath fibers.
14. (canceled) 
15. (canceled)

16. (original) The yarn of claim 13 and wherein the core fibers and sheath fibers each have different material properties to produce a composite yarn incorporating such different material properties.
17. (original) The yarn of claim 13 and wherein the fibers of the core and sheath are selected from the group consisting essentially of natural fibers, synthetic fibers and combinations of natural and synthetic fibers.
18. (currently amended) A yarn bundle having improved material properties, including enhanced resistance to unraveling and linting, the yarn bundle comprising or enhanced bulking of light weight spun yarns each comprising a series of fibers, each of a length of about three inches or less and selected from at least one of a series of natural fibers, synthetic ~~films~~ fibers, ~~and or~~ a combination of natural and synthetic fibers ~~or filaments forming a yarn bundle~~, the yarn bundle being subjected to a needling process wherein the fibers thereof are engaged and penetrated by a series of needles such that the fibers of the yarn bundle are intermixed to form the yarn.
19. (canceled) 
20. (currently amended) The yarn bundle of claim 18 and wherein the yarn bundle comprises a composite yarn including a first yarn and a second yarn each consisting essentially of natural fibers, synthetic fibers or a combination thereof, the yarns positioned adjacent and

parallel to each other such that the needles penetrate approximately through the centerline of both yarns so that the fibers of the first yarn are intermixed with the fibers of the second yarn to weld the yarns together to form the composite yarn.

21. (currently amended) The yarn bundle of claim 20 and wherein the first and second yarns each have different material properties such that the composite yarn includes the different material properties of both yarns.

22. (currently amended) The yarn bundle of claim 18 and wherein the fibers of the yarn bundle are engaged by the needles and the yarn bundle is advanced at a predetermined rate and distance between strokes of the needles during the needling process to create a desired aesthetic appearance for the yarn.

23. (currently amended) The yarn bundle of claim 18 and further comprising a fibrous web attached to the yarn bundle by the engagement of fibers of the fibrous web with the series of needles during the needling process whereby the fibers of the fibrous web and the fibers of the yarn ~~bundles~~ bundle are intermixed.
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24. (New) The yarn bundle of claim 18 and wherein the yarn fibers are twisted prior to needling to lock in the twist of the yarn without heat setting.

25. (new) A fiber mat comprising a yarn having a core wrapped with a sheath, the core and sheath each formed of natural fibers, synthetic fibers or a combination thereof having desired material properties, and a fibrous web including natural fibers, synthetic fibers or a combination thereof, wherein the fibers of the core, sheath and fibrous web are of a length of about three inches or less and are engaged by needles adapted to penetrate substantially along a center line of the core so as to cause the fibers of the core and sheath of the yarn to become substantially intermixed with and attached to the fibrous web to provide the fiber mat with enhanced resistance to unraveling and linting, enhanced absorbency and/or desired aesthetic properties.

26. (new) A spun composite yarn, comprising a first yarn and a second yarn, each formed from synthetic fibers, natural fibers or a combination thereof and each having different desired performance or aesthetic properties, said first and second yarns each being twisted and arranged in a parallel relationship, and are subjected to a needling operation wherein a series of needles penetrate said first and second yarns, approximately through centerlines thereof, to substantially intermix said fibers of said yarns and weld said yarns together to form the composite yarn having combined performance or aesthetic properties of both said first and second yarns.

27. (new) The composite yarn of claim 26 and wherein the core fibers and sheath fibers of each yarn have different material properties to produce a composite yarn incorporating such different material properties.

28. (new) A yarn bundle comprising a spun yarn having desired material properties and being formed from natural fibers, synthetic fibers, or a combination thereof, the fibers being three inches or less in length, and a fiber mat, consisting of natural fibers, synthetic fibers, or a combination thereof, and wherein said yarn and fiber mat are subjected to needling whereby said fibers of said fiber mat penetrate said spun yarn and substantially intermix with said fibers of said spun yarn to attach said spun yarn to said fiber mat and provide the material properties of said spun yarn to said fiber mat.

29. (new) The yarn bundle of claim 28 and wherein said fiber mat is slit and wrapped about said yarn.
